

# The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, December 15, 1994

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## Christmas wonder

FORDYCE, Ark. — Andy Jenkins, age 5, becomes part of the scene as he takes a pensive look at the infant Jesus, part of the nativity scene in his home. Andy is a member of First Church, Fordyce. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

### Embryo studies criticized

President Clinton has rejected a recommendation from the federal government's National Institutes of Health (NIH) to use public money for experiments on developing human embryos. Clinton said the recommendation, which had been strongly condemned by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission (CLC), "raises profound moral and ethical questions." CLC director Richard Land, along with the commission's biomedical consultant Ben Mitchell, urged NIH director Richard Varmus to halt the program endorsed by the 19-member Human Embryo Research Panel because of the sanctity of human life and apparent conflicts of interest involving panelists already involved in privately-funded embryo research. The panel ruled that the fertilized embryos chosen for the research do not have the "same moral status as infants and children," and can be destroyed after the experiments. Letters of protest can still be sent to: Division of Science Policy Analysis and Development, NIH; Building 1/Room 218; 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20892.

### Argentina cases production

Baptists and other evangelical groups in the second-largest country in South America are rejoicing over the Argentinian national assembly's recent action removing the constitutional requirement that only Roman Catholics can serve as president, according to the Baptist World Alliance (BWA). Argentina, the former Spanish colony that declared independence in 1810 while Spain was preoccupied with Napoleon's invasion, has been operating under the same constitution since 1853 and is currently undergoing major revisions in almost every area of that document. BWA estimates 85% of Argentina's 33 million people are Roman Catholic, but less than 5% regularly attend mass. As Argentine society has become more pluralistic and secularized in recent decades, BWA reports, evangelical Christian groups have made significant inroads. Buenos Aires, the capital city, will play host to the 17th Baptist World Congress on Aug. 1-6, 1995. The Southern Baptist Convention holds membership in BWA and the organization's executive director, Denton Lotz, is married to a Mississippian.

### Looking Back...

10 years ago

Jimmy Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, is on hand as Lauderdale Association becomes the first in the Southern Baptist Convention to provide local programming over the ACTS network.

20 years ago

Joe Abrams, longtime Baptist Building employee presently serving as associate editor of The Baptist Record, announces his retirement after 25 years of service with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

50 years ago

The Mississippi Baptist Convention Board calls in the last of three bond issues worth \$1,000,000 in outstanding indebtedness. Calling in the bonds 13 years early will result in a savings in interest payments of over \$284,000.

*First person...*

## Tyler begins his journey of faith

By Polly House

NASHVILLE (BP) — Probably one of the first prayers a Christian couple utters after finding out they are going to have a baby is, "Lord, let this child grow up to be a Christian."

For my husband Sam and me, this prayer has just been answered in our 7-year-old son, Tyler.

Tyler was born talking. As he has grown, he has constantly asked questions. He has the most insatiable curiosity about life. A big part of his life has been church and Sunday School, so questions about God and Jesus have come along just like questions about why we can't eat bugs and why trucks are bigger than cars.

Tyler's Sunday School teachers at Crievewood Church in Nashville where we are members have been so good. They have reinforced what Tyler is taught at home. Tyler has learned about the Bible and what Jesus wants him to do. He has memorized Scriptures and learned the importance of being kind.

Sam and I knew Tyler was beginning to have the stirrings of the heart about accepting Christ, but we didn't know just when it would happen. He was talking about such things as knowing about God, but not having him in his heart. He was beginning the process.

One morning Tyler came into the kitchen and said, "Mom, I just had a vision from God. He told me he had something special for me to do for the world."

I said, "Really. Was it like a dream?"

"No, Mom, it wasn't a dream. I was awake," he said.

"How do you know it was God?" I asked.

He looked at me with that look that only children can give their parents — the one that says, How could you have ever grown up being that stupid? — and answered, "Mom, when God tells you something, you know it."

We talked about what his "vision" might mean. Maybe it was about being a missionary. Tyler said, "That might be so, because a missionary can be anything and be anywhere and right now, God hadn't told me anything specific." Then, he said, "You have to be a Christian before you can be a missionary, don't you?"

I told him, yes, it generally worked that way.

Well, he admitted, that would be a problem, because he wasn't a Christian yet. I told him he was only 7 and had time to decide about that.

We tried to answer his questions when he would ask, being careful not to put words in his mouth. When he accepted Christ, we wanted to know it was because he had a personal experience with Jesus, not just because he was mimicking words he'd heard us say.

One day, Tyler and I were in a local department store and he said, "Mom, I'm not a Christian. I go to church and all that, but that's not what makes you a Christian, is it?" I told him he was right. As important as church is, church isn't what makes you a Christian.

He said, "Then, how do I get to be one?"

I told him this was such an important subject that we would talk as soon as we got home.

That evening Tyler and Sam read Scriptures, talked about why Jesus died, what that meant to us, and what Tyler could do about it.

Tyler came running into his room where his 5-year-old brother Travis and I were reading. Tyler had the biggest grin on his face I had seen in a long time and proudly announced, "Mom, Travis, I'm a Christian!"

I hugged him and told him how proud I was of him for making such an important decision. He told me he was proud of himself!

When it came time for Tyler to be baptized, I asked him if he would like for his dad to be the one to baptize him. Tyler looked at me and said, "Can he do that?"

I told him, "Yes, Tyler, your daddy is an ordained minister...."

But Tyler said, "No, Mom, I mean, does he know how?"

After assuring him Sam did "know how" to baptize someone, he was delighted he and his dad would have that special memory.

So, Sam baptized Tyler. Travis and I watched proudly from the floor of the sanctuary.

Now, Sam and I have a new prayer for Tyler. We pray that he will grow in his faith, learn from God's Word, and go on into his life knowing that he is loved.

House is an editorial assistant at Baptist Press. Sam House coordinates products and events relating to Experiencing God, BSSB.

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

## Has Christmas been hijacked?

Christmas is basically a Christian holy day. Supposedly, if Christians wanted to have it cancelled, it would be mainly their decision.

Wrong.

Christians no longer "own" Christmas. It has become too successful a venture, and has now been taken over by a commercial hijacker. "Shop 'til you drop" is its theme, and "go to now, buy, and sell" is the verse. Many business concerns will do one third of their annual business during the last 35 days of the year.

Christians may shout, "Jesus is the reason for the season;" but the hijacker says, "Oh, yes," and goes on as usual. It is consumption which is glorified — a ribbon-cutting for the new mall draws the multitude. The commercial world screams for less religion and more tinsel: "Don't inhibit the masses with all that Bethlehem stuff." The pagans have a hammer-lock on the holiday and are not about to turn loose. Even a Jewish rabbi has declared, "The real Christmas challenge belongs to Christians: how to take Christmas out of a

secularized public domain and move it back into the religious sphere once again."

City Hall now makes more Christmas rules than the church. Many local governments oppose any Christian symbolism for 11 months, only to crazily embrace it in the 12th.

Apparently the church is too anemic to salvage Christmas, or we found it more convenient to join with the commercial element. Moreover, Thanksgiving and Easter are being eyed by the opportunistic commercial world. There are those who have given up the idea of Christmas being anything except a commercial holiday. They see Easter as being the supreme Christian holy day. Others squirm and shop, knowing something is awry, but feeling helpless to prevent it. Some will go along with the commercial holiday but seek to cap it with a religious frosting. Really, is there anything we can do?

The Bible does not speak of a Christmas holiday. Christ may have been born Dec. 25, but it is

not likely. His birth could have been in April or May. The truth is — he was born. If we honor him, then Dec. 25 is as good as any other day. The apostle Paul said, "Let no man judge you... in respect of any holy day, or the new moon or of the sabbath days" (Col. 2:16). Thus, whatever day we choose, whether in word or deed, let Christ be honored.

Christmas is such a beautiful season. It blesses us with some of the world's finest music, and it deepens our friendships in its gatherings. What a shame for children to go through the Christmas season never hearing of the real Christmas story.

It doesn't have to be that way. Children can be taught the real meaning of the season, plus the importance of sacrificial giving to mission causes. Do we impart the message that materialism is more important than the Christmas message? Have we let the pagan world lasso us into a commercial orgy? Are we wrapped, tied, and scattered by Christmas day... not to mention broke and exhausted?

## THE FRAGMENTS

The battle of  
the thermostat

"Why is it," the woman asked, "that the men with coats on always set the thermostat?" This is a running battle in some of our best churches. The temperature is important for comfort. In the summertime, the women like for it to be a cool 78 degrees; the men prefer something just north of a meat freezer.

It is a proven fact that people work more, think more, and fuss more when the thermostat is around 68 degrees. In every church there is need for a conveniently-located thermostat, in easy reach, at eye-level, but not connected to anything. That way every person can change the setting to suit his or her mind... and

that's where it all takes place.

Of course, all of this has its corollary in the home. There are certain members of my family who disregard the high temperature with, "I don't feel warm." Never mind that it is 80 degrees inside, it is the proximity of one to the heat — not the temperature — that counts. Dual controls on electric blankets solve it for some people; late model autos even have "his" and "her" settings.

For peace and contentment in your home or church, I suggest you do your best. Like the grandmother said, "I have trouble with Pa and the fire; when I turn to see about one, the other goes out."

— GH

Jesus' birth, I quietly treasure these things in my heart and often think about them."

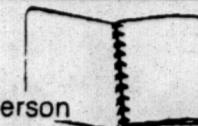
King said she knew many of the things she wrote about, but had never before been forced to verbalize them. "It crystallized my feelings into tangible things — into words. A lot of it floats around in your mind and you don't ever nail it down," she said.

Thornton said he hopes all who read the devotions will be forced, as the writers were, to reflect on their relationship with God and each other during the Christmas season.

Hancock is lifestyle editor, (Mt. Vernon, Ill.) REGISTER-NEWS, and a free-lance writer.

Thursday, December 15, 1994

Guy Henderson



"THIS ARTICLE SAYS  
TODAY'S CHURCHES ARE  
BECOMING INCREASINGLY  
LIKE THE WORLD!"

"BROTHER ROY IS  
PREACHING HIS SERMON  
IN A SANTA SUIT.  
—WHAT DID YOU  
SAY, HONEY?"



## Christmastime devotionals becomes church's tradition

By Valerie Hancock

MIDLOTHIAN, Va. (BP) — The meaning of Advent is clear to members of Tomahawk Church, Midlothian, Va. — as clear as the star that shone so brightly that first Christmas. Like the shepherds who walked the road to Bethlehem to greet the newborn King, the church family approaches each Advent season with unity, sharing personal experiences as they await the celebration of Christ's birth.

"I have come to realize that people's stories — whatever their stories — are the most effective means of communicating whatever it is we're speaking about, particularly when you're talking about the gospel," said Clay Thornton, the church's pastor. "Hearing how God has touched the lives and hearts of people you know and hearing about the things that have happened to them — that's what it's all about."

Members of the church find truth in the pastor's words as they spend time in meditation and prayer with the church's annual *Advent Devotions*, a booklet written by members of the church since the late 1980s to aid families in worshiping together during Advent.

In this year's edition four writers each composed seven devotions around one of four themes — prophecy, peace, joy, and love. Thornton gave suggested Scripture passages and songs for the writers to consider, and then the writers modeled their ideas and experiences around a central theme. There is also a Christmas symbol and prayer thought suggested for each day.

According to Thornton, the idea is to give families a guide to having devotions together daily during Advent. Hopefully, families will read Scripture, sing a carol, and possibly display the symbol in their home, he said. He also suggested families light candles in an Advent wreath, decorate a chrismon tree or display a creche, more commonly known as a Nativity scene, adding figures as Christmas approaches.

With a mailing list numbering more than 600 families, Thornton said the community would be disappointed if the church did not continue to publish the booklet.

"We have set an expectation each year. Now we have a responsibility to help people with this type of devotion," he said.

Gail King, one of the booklet's authors, says the devotions are intended to help families remember the true meaning of Christmas among all the events going on in people's lives.

Recently diagnosed with a serious health problem, King chose to write on the subject of peace. "Since that time I have come to walk so much closer to God and I am doing very well. My doctor calls me a walking miracle," she said.

Not only does King write of the peace she feels, but also of the peace she has been able to make with family members in her life.

A section in one of her devotions states: "There had been a rift in my family that no one seemed to be able to heal. Two of my sisters had not spoken to each other for many years.... In the past year one of these sisters has found out that she has lung cancer. My brother and I are also ill, so we wanted to get all six (siblings) together as soon as we could. I prayed for the wisdom to help heal the breach. The Lord sent me a miracle. Through his love He gave me the right words to say and my family was once again made whole."

"It surprised me how personal I was able to be with all my writing — God gave me the ideas and ability to write meaningful words," said Sarah Cosby, the church's secretary, who contributed devotions on joy.

Even though Cosby's twins will soon be 18 years old, she still remembers the complications she encountered when she gave birth. But ultimately she remembers the joy God bestowed.

In one of her devotions Cosby recounts: "I believed (the twins) were really mine, and I have always been thankful to God for giving our family two healthy babies that night.... God was with us.... And as Mary did the night of

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# Annuity Board trustees move toward mutual fund environment

DALLAS (BP) — Trustees of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention met in a called session Dec. 5 and took another step toward restructuring its investment program into registered mutual funds.

Chairman Richard C. Scott explained regular trustee meetings do not allow enough time to consider the complicated issues and processes necessary to move from the current offering of four investment funds to an environment regulated by both the federal Securities and Exchange Commission and securities laws of 50 states.

In 1992 trustees approved staff work to explore the registered mutual fund environment with the understanding that regular reports would be made and trustees would decide future actions at appropriate intervals.

The only action taken by the board Dec. 5 was adoption of resolutions that were prepared by Annuity Board and Convention Executive Committee representatives Nov. 29 in Nashville. The resolutions authorize continued work and ensure Executive Committee or Southern Baptist Convention involvement in the process.

Scott, accompanied by Annuity

Board President Paul W. Powell, Chief Operating Officer W. Gordon Hobgood Jr., trustee Donald H. Wills, and general counsel James T. Herod met in Nashville with several members of the Executive Committee staff and elected leadership and the Executive Committee's legal counsel to give advance briefing on what the trustees would be considering.

Powell then invited Executive Committee leadership to attend the trustee meeting. President Morris H. Chapman and Chairman Fred H. Wolfe were accompanied by attorney James P. Guenther and a member of his staff. None of the Executive Committee representatives spoke except Wolfe who confirmed the joint production of the resolutions.

The Dallas meeting, held at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, included a lengthy presentation by outside legal counsel, a question and answer period, and an audio-visual presentation by John R. Jones, senior vice president for fiduciary services at the Annuity Board. Jones presented a review of current investment structure, then contrasted the structure with a possible mutual fund environment.

Hobgood estimated implementation of a mutual fund structure could not be earlier than 1996.

Trustees adopted the following resolutions defining an understanding with Executive Committee leadership:

"That the Board of Trustees approves and directs the staff to continue developing a plan to use

a mutual fund structure to conduct its investment activities which was presented to the board of trustees at its meeting on Dec. 5, 1994; and

"That the mutual fund structure shall take effect only after it has been approved by the Board of Trustees, the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, and, if the Executive

Committee deems it appropriate, the Southern Baptist Convention; and

"That the Annuity Board staff report its progress at each of the forthcoming Board of Trustee meetings including a report of coordinating activities with the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention."

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

# The Baptist Record

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Published Since 1877

## Virginia conservative group to form "state convention"

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — Southern Baptist conservatives in Virginia took an unprecedented step Dec. 8 with the announcement that they will study the "procedures and requirements for the establishment of... a separate state convention."

The action came during a meeting in Richmond of the group's executive committee which, according to a news release, unanimously passed a resolution starting the process.

Bob R. Melvin, the organization's president and pastor of Spotswood Church, Fredericksburg, will appoint a special committee to study the procedures and requirements and then recommend the action to the executive committee "not later than its May 1995 meeting."

The conservative group also invited Virginia Baptist churches, "who wish to do so," to channel their Cooperative Program gifts for the Southern Baptist Convention budget through the "Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia" (SBCV) group. The organization listed a Virginia Beach address.

The news release advised Virginia churches the SBCV "is not yet a state convention and has no annuity plan agreement with the SBC Annuity Board."

"Consequently, all churches should continue to send \$35 per month per annuity plan participant to the Baptist General Association of Virginia."

Baptist Press contacted the office of Reginald M. McDonough, executive director of the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV), for comment but McDonough was out of the office and not available for comment at the time.

The Virginia conservatives' plan would be a historic and unprecedented step. Apparently, conservatives in Texas also are considering a new state convention and a charter for a new Texas Baptist convention was filed with the state of Texas by a Houston conservative, Walt Carpenter.

T.C. Pinckney, spokesman for the conservative group, said the action "represents a course of action forced upon conservatives, not a choice sought by most conservative leaders." Pinckney, a retired Air Force officer from Alexandria, Va., and a member of the SBC Executive Committee from the state, defended the group's action in a commentary in the December issue of the Virginia conservative publication, *Baptist Banner*.

"The BGAV constitutional amendment passed last month in Salem (Va.) reduces messengers authorized to conservative churches and only to conservative churches. It does this by changing the historical provision that all money contributed by a church to the Cooperative Program counted toward authorizing messengers to the annual state convention," Pinckney said. "That is no longer the case...."

The constitutional change makes gifts to Virginia Baptist ministries alone the basis for church representation at BGAV meetings. Many churches represented by SBCV bypass the state convention.

Michael J. Clingenpeel, editor of the state convention's newspaper, *The Religious Herald*, in an editorial in the Nov. 24 edition, described "What Happened in Salem — And Why?" Clingenpeel said Virginia messengers felt the changes were fair, regardless of motivation, and "in the future, churches that pay the band will name the tune."

Regarding implications of the Salem vote, Clingenpeel said the change does not make a "takeover of the BGAV impossible, though almost certainly it will dilute the potential voting strength of the conservative minority in the BGAV.... (Any) future takeover will be accomplished only by individuals and churches who financially support the BGAV, which is altogether proper."

There were 202 conservative churches which had remained supportive of the BGAV by designating their own giving plan (under the old constitution), Pinckney said, representing 13.03% of the total number in the state. "But they (were also) faithful to the Cooperative Program, giving 18.78% of the CP dollars contributed in 1993" by Virginia churches.

Using the new constitutional formula passed this year, Pinckney said 195 of those 202 churches would have their messenger representation cut.

In his commentary, Pinckney added a consoling note.

"If we must go, let it be with prayer for God's leadership. Let it be with sorrow and regret. We loved the BGAV. At one time the BGAV was a great, leading state convention. It is sad now to see it dwindling and atrophying under no doubt sincere but drastically misguided, divisive, anti-SBC, and counterproductive policies. So let us carefully and temperately seek a new way. With sorrow and regret. Without rancor or hard feelings. With best-wishes and sincere prayers for those left behind."

## No BR December 29

Because postal regulations require that we publish only 50 issues per year, there will be no *Baptist Record* published on Dec. 29, 1994.

The following deadlines for the Jan. 5, 1995 issue will be observed:

For advertising, space must be reserved by Dec. 15. Advertising copy should be in *The Baptist Record* office by Dec. 20.

For news items, copy should be in *The Record* office by Dec. 21.

For more information, call *The Baptist Record* at (601) 968-3800 or (800) 748-1651.

## Executive committee approves Nichols to become Annuity rep

Robin Nichols has been approved by the executive committee of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board to become Annuity representative in the Church-Minister Relations and Annuity Department beginning January 1995. Louis Smith is department director.



Nichols

Nichols, an employee of the MBCB since 1980, will replace Bill Sellers who is retiring.

Nichols has been a consultant in the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department. Recent assignments have been in family ministry and adult discipleship. A native of Vicksburg, Nichols is a graduate of Clarke College and Mississippi College. He earned a master of divinity degree from Southern Seminary and a master of science degree in communication from Mississippi College.

He was minister to youth and activities at First Church, Newnan, Ga., 1975-80; minister of education and youth at Crestwood Church, Louisville, Ky., 1972-75; minister of youth at Northminster Church, Jackson, 1971, and at Highland Church, Vicksburg, 1970. He served simultaneously as Baptist Student Union director at the University of Montana and as pastor of Darby Baptist Mission at

Darby, Montana, 1968-69.

Nichols and his wife, the former Jane Edwards, have two sons, Nathan, 15, and Andrew, 11.

In other business the executive committee approved expenditure of \$41,984 to upgrade the MBCB computer system. This includes several new personal computers, printers, and system upgrades. The group also approved a slight increase in off-season rates for Central Hills Baptist Retreat at Kosciusko.

Members raised the ceiling on aid to forced terminated ministers from \$1,400 to \$1,800, and heard a report by Bill Causey, executive director-treasurer, on his recent trip to Zimbabwe to close out the three-year partnership with that country's Baptists. At least 32 new churches are in existence and more than 4,000 have made professions of faith in Jesus Christ as a result of the partnership that took several hundred Mississippi Baptists to that African country. Causey said he was given a wooden carving of people being helped to climb a mountain by standing on one another's shoulders. Causey said "that's the way they feel" about our participation.

Re-elected chairman of the executive committee was Jim Futral, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson, and vice chairman, Gene Henderson, pastor of First Church, Brandon. Kermit McGregor, pastor of First Church, Mendenhall, was elected secretary.



**MEMPHIS** — More than 30,000 lbs. of equipment and supplies were loaded into a C-97 cargo plane at Memphis International Airport Nov. 8 to begin the first phase of Southern Baptists' relief efforts in Haiti. Coordinated by the Memphis-based Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and the convention's Foreign Mission Board, the project will involve more than 200 volunteers in food distribution, water well repair, and medical assistance over several months. (Brotherhood photo by Bob Carey)

## Brotherhood needs vols for Haiti food distribution

Volunteers are needed to complete a team of Mississippi Baptists going to Haiti in January to participate in a feeding program there.

The project is part of a Brotherhood Commission request for 16 teams of 10-12 persons. The Mississippi group is needed in Haiti Jan. 20-Feb. 4.

The assignment is in food distribution — repackaging large parcels of food into family-size portions. This is demanding work, according to request documents.

Cost of the project is \$900 per person. The Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief program is subsidizing each person with scholarships of \$450. That leaves \$450 to be provided by each participant. Cost includes overnight and breakfast in Miami, round trip air fare from New Orleans to Port-au-Prince, meals and lodging while in Haiti, local transportation, and insurance.

For details on participation, contact the Brotherhood Department at 1-800-748-1651.

## Christians can have hope despite bleak predictions

By Sarah Zimmerman

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — The future will offer a world of plagues, violence, and cynicism, but Christians have reason to be optimistic, said Ted Ward.

"We are children of the most high God and he is the creator and controller," said the professor of Christian education and missions at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Ill. "We are optimistic because our father has it in his hands. But as his servant, in tough times we can expect tough assignments."

The next century will be marked by plagues and war, Ward told state directors of evangelism. New diseases will be rampant due to viruses becoming resistant to antibiotics.

"The world is desperate for peace makers," Ward said. "The church should know how to deal with others who are different in a spirit of reconciliation that reflects the Prince of Peace."

Attitudes in the future will be more cynical and jaded, Ward predicted, because people will be convinced nothing will solve society's ills.

In such an environment, people will exist in survival mode. Rather than planning for the future, people will only think about making it from one day to the next.

To respond to people in the future, Southern Baptists must be willing to change their approach.

To reach people for Christ in such a bleak society, Ward said Christians need to:

1. Go where people are rather than merely inviting them to meetings.

2. Make repeated contacts. "Don't just dump a speech on them and leave."

3. Accept Christians who do not yet share Christ. "Spiritual maturation is a life-long process," Ward said.

4. Model the love of the gospel by how you treat people as well as words you say.

5. Wait on the truth of God to work in the lives of others. Don't rush things.

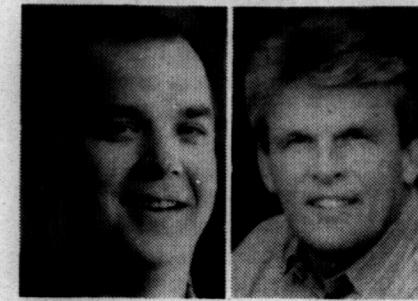
6. Allow God to teach your disciples. Don't call attention to yourself.

Zimmerman writes for HMB.

## Youth Evangelism Conference scheduled for Dec. 29-30 at MC

The 1994 Mississippi Baptist Youth Evangelism Conference takes place Dec. 29-30 at the Mississippi College Coliseum in Clinton. Cost of this celebration is \$5. Those who pre-register by Dec. 16 get a free breakfast on Dec. 30.

The conference is designed to offer young people opportunities for a spiritual experience during the Christmas break. The music, messages, and work groups aim participants toward expressing their Christian experience in every situation. Featured



Horton

Ousley

program personalities will be Rick Ousley, worship leader, pastor of the Church at Brook Hills in Birmingham; Paul Horton, music worship; Pam Thum, concert artist; and Doug Berkley, mime artist.

Registration begins at noon on Dec. 29 with the program starting at 2. It concludes the next afternoon at 3.

This event is sponsored by the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. It is put together by a committee consisting of James Fancher, consultant in the Evangelism Department; Tom Daniel of First Church, Starkville; Jim Lott of First Church, Pearl; Cindy Townsend of First Church, Jackson; John Gibson of First Church, Greenwood; Ricky Young of First Church, Cleveland; Harvey Ellis of First Church, Clinton; and Don Lum of First Church, Columbia.



Thum

## Survey reveals Southern Baptist teens pray, read Bible, lie, cheat

By Terri Lackey

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — A recent survey of Southern Baptist teenagers revealed 68% lie to their parents, 29% would lie for a friend to keep him out of trouble, and 44% cheat on tests.

Of the nearly 5,000 teens surveyed at 1994 winter and summer youth conferences, one-fourth (24%) indicated they had at some time considered suicide, 21% reported they drink alcoholic beverages, and 65% admitted to saying "bad things about people behind their backs."

"We conduct these surveys each year as a basis to format future curriculum and resources," said Clyde Hall, manager of the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division youth section. "However, some of the answers we are seeing are startling."

Hall presented the survey findings to state discipleship and family ministry leaders at the BSSB in early December for annual meetings.

Of the 4,959 youths who participated in the survey, a sample of 500 was analyzed, according to Hall, who said the findings cannot be projected to all Southern Baptist youths, but only to those who participated in the survey. Fifty-five percent of the sample group were female and 45% were male.

Sixty-eight percent said they believe sex before marriage is wrong, but 17% indicated they were unsure of their beliefs about pre-marital sex.

"That 17% added to the 6% who said sex before marriage is OK and the 8% who said sex is OK if they love each other adds up to 31% who are unwilling to believe what the Scripture says about sex," Hall said.

The largest portion of males (39%) answered yes to the question, "Would you marry a girl if you got her pregnant?" Twenty-four percent

majority of them are Christians, they read their Bible and they pray. So why are some of these answers so dismal?"

That's the same question Josh McDowell posed before launching his "Right from Wrong" campaign recently.

McDowell, a widely known speaker and writer from California, told state directors at the same annual meeting that the No. 1 problem facing America today is that "evangelical, fundamental church kids no longer believe in biblical moral absolutes."

"Kids and adults today know no truths apart from themselves. When it comes to ethics and reality, everything is negotiable. There is no objective standard. What might be right for you isn't right for me" is the prevalent belief in society today, he said.

The BSSB is working with McDowell and other publishers to release a full line of curriculum in June 1995 which supports McDowell's "Right from Wrong" campaign.

Lackey writes for BSSB.



**WINNERS** — Elizabeth Neill (from left), Annadaire Ingram, and Amy Albritton, all of Jackson, were winners at the National Association of Teachers of Singers regional convention recently held in Natchitoches, La. The three women are students of Gerald Claxton, instructor of music at Mississippi College. (MC photo by Jesse Worley)

# Richard Land helps draft school prayer amendment

By Ray Waddle

NASHVILLE (AP) — Fueled by the Republicans' new-found power on Capitol Hill, Southern Baptists plan to leave their mark on a proposed prayer-in-schools amendment to the Constitution.

Richard Land, director of the Christian Life Commission in Nashville, flew to Washington, D.C., Dec. 7 to meet with Rep. Ernest Istook, R-Oklahoma, to help draft such an amendment.

The Christian Life Commission expects its conservative, pro-family agenda to get a more sympathetic hearing in a GOP-majority Congress, Land said. The Baptist agency's sudden post-election involvement in drafting an amendment dramatizes that.

"There's some acknowledgement

that we might know what's going on in the real world a little more than people who spend their lives inside the (Washington) Beltway," Land said.

"There's not a perfect solution, but if an amendment is done right, it will vastly increase public support for public education."

The prayer issue has triggered emotions on both sides. An interfaith coalition — which includes some Baptists — has been put together to oppose any amendment.

The group said it's unnecessary because students can legally pray now — individually, or in groups before or after school.

Brent Walker, an amendment opponent, said he prefers educating teachers about the students'

rights. "An amendment will only create more mischief," said Walker, legal director at the Baptist Joint Committee, a religious liberty lobby.

Istook's press secretary, Steve Jones, confirmed the congressman met with both Land and James Smith, the Christian Life Commission's government relations director, for a discussion of "legalese," or proper constitutional wording, on Dec. 7. Jones said Istook plans on holding several such meetings and it is too early to predict when the amendment might be ready for a vote.

Waddle is religion editor for the Nashville TENNESSEAN. Pam Parry contributed to this story.

Thursday, December 15, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5



Carolyn Orr (right), of Jackson, greets Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Ala., after O'Brien addressed the Baptist Women of First Church, Jackson, on Dec. 6. O'Brien and Mississippi native Jerry Rankin, president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., were in the state to emphasize the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

## RTVC will offer CD-ROM about its work and mission

FORT WORTH (BP) — The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission plans to take a place on the information superhighway in the spring of 1995. It is producing an interactive CD-ROM (CDI) about its work and mission.

Project leader Glenn McEwen, RTVC vice president of engineering, said the CD would be both a teaching and learning tool for those interested in the commission.

"There are many facets to the work of the Radio and Television Commission, many of which aren't as visible as others," McEwen said. "The value of this CD-ROM technology is that a person can use his or her computer to learn about all or a portion of the work being done by the commission. He or she can go behind the scenes and discover all that is involved in producing a program or in keeping ACTS and FamilyNet on the air."

"This multi-media CD-ROM presentation deals with more than television," said Jack Johnson, RTVC president. "It also showcases the history and continuing work of our radio ministry. 'The Baptist Hour,' for example, began in 1941 and continues to be a flagship program. And in 1994, 'MasterControl' was 35 years old; 'Country Crossroads' and 'Powerline' were 25 years old."

"The Baptist Hour," broadcast now on both radio and television, features Frank Pollard, pastor of First Church, Jackson, who provides insight on living the Christian life. The program is rebroadcast in Russia as "Word of Life" and reaches a potential audience of almost 100 million.

"MasterControl" is an around-the-world total talk, magazine-style program with features on travel, health, and lifestyle. It also features best-selling authors interspersed with messages on Christian living.

Adult contemporary music from the '70s, '80s, and '90s with Christian messages is the format for "Powerline." "Country Crossroads," now on both radio and television, is a country music program that includes Christian testimonies from various artists.

In explaining why he authorized the CD-ROM project, Johnson said, "It's important that the Christian community be involved in multi-media because of the interactivity associated with it. The nature of our message is interactive. When Christ spoke, the Bible shows that he expected a response.

"Interactive TV isn't just coming, it's here. And by entering this one arena, the development of a CD-ROM, we're learning what is involved and how to produce this technology. We need to understand what we can and can't do."

## O'Brien, Rankin visit Mississippi to prompt Baptists to pray, give

By Teresa Dickens

Mississippi Baptist churches observed last week's Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions in a variety of ways. The week of prayer is held each year to kick off the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

Most churches highlighted the prayer emphasis in Sunday and Wednesday church services. Many also hosted cottage prayer meetings at church or in a member's home, or held special events, such as mission banquets and mission studies, to mark the eight-day observance.

Two Hinds County churches featured national missions leaders in their congregations' festivities. Jerry Rankin, president of the Foreign Mission Board, spoke at First Church, Clinton, Dec. 5, and Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union SBC, spent Dec. 5 and 6 at First Church, Jackson.

In keeping with this year's theme "Worth the Risk," both

leaders spoke of the risks Southern Baptist missionaries take on an on-going basis to share the gospel with lost people around the world. Rankin said the commitment and integrity of missionaries keep them on their assigned fields despite the costly nature of the task.

O'Brien noted that risk is also involved for any Christian who obeys the Great Commission. Unfortunately, few Christians take that risk, she suggested.

She told the story of a mother moving frantically through a crowd gathered around an accident scene involving a child. When she determines that the child is not her's, she exclaims, "It's okay. It's not mine!"

"Her response was human, but not godly," O'Brien commented.

Too often Christians respond as the mother did and do not see the opportunity to help someone along the way, she said.

"Join the journey," she pleaded. "It's worth the risk!"



## Correction

In its Dec. 8 issue, *The Baptist Record* published a photo cutline which mentioned Rosa Wade as being the widow of the late John Allen Wade Jr. of Winona. She is the wife of John Allen Wade Jr., who is still living. *The Baptist Record* regrets the error, and any inconvenience it may have caused. The cutline should have read:

CARNEGIE SILVER MEDAL — Rosa Wade (left), wife of John Allen Wade Jr. of Winona, recently presented her husband's Carnegie Silver Medal and other documents to Howell Todd, president of Mississippi College (MC), to be displayed in the school's library. John Wade, pastor and 1937 MC graduate, was awarded the hero's medal in 1948 after he rescued a 72-year-old farmer from a well cave-in at Kilmichael. The Wades' sons, Bob of Artesia, Miss.; Larry of Baton Rouge, La.; Phil of Talladega, Ala.; and Ronald of Kansas City, Mo., made arrangements for the donation. The Wade Family General Scholarship Fund, in honor of John and Rosa Wade, is supported by the family. (MC photo by Jesse Worley)

## First Church, Houlka, loses facilities to fire

The facilities of First Church of Houlka, Chickasaw Association, burned to the ground Sunday morning, Dec. 11. The fire was discovered at 8:45 a.m. — too late to save the sanctuary or the education building. The building was partially covered by insurance.

The church conducted its worship service in the family life center. Many of the members were wet, muddy, and weary from battling the blaze, but still they worshipped. Gary Blair is pastor.

# Youth baptisms take drastic plunge over 20 years

By Sarah Zimmerman

**ATLANTA (BP)** — While baptism statistics in the Southern Baptist Convention have been on a roller coaster ride since 1972, baptisms among teenagers have taken the greatest plunge.

A lack of adult volunteers leads the list of reasons for the decline, say leaders of youth ministries.

In 1972, Southern Baptists set a record by baptizing 445,725 people. Almost 31% of that total were people ages 12 to 17, according to Home Mission Board research.

#### Youth lead decline

Of last year's 349,073 baptisms, 23% were youths. Since 1972, no other age group had a greater decline in the percentage of total baptisms.

Although the percentage of youths in the nation's population has declined, baptisms have not kept pace with the number of teenagers, said Dean Finley, HMB youth evangelism specialist.

In 1971, Southern Baptists baptized one of every 191 teens. In 1990, they baptized one of every 253.

#### Why?

One reason Southern Baptists are baptizing fewer teens is that when a church hires a youth director, adults tend to think they no longer need to be leaders in the youth ministry, Finley said.

"Church members think, 'That's the youth minister's job.' Adults have said, 'That's not my

task.' But there's a direct relationship between the number of adults involved in ministry and the number of teenagers who get saved," Finley said.

Youth ministers at churches that consistently lead the Southern Baptist Convention in youth baptisms agree adult volunteers are vital to their success.

#### Heart for youth

Last year Cascade Hills Church, Columbus, Ga., baptized 223 teens. While that was the second highest in the convention, the church did not have a paid youth minister last year.

"You don't have to have a youth director, but you do have to have a heart for youth," said pastor Bill Purvis. "I try to be real practical and communicate in their language."

This year the church hired two youth ministers, one for senior high students and another for junior high students.

First Church, Springdale, Ark., led the SBC in youth baptisms last year with 272.

John Cope, pastor to students, said his job is to motivate and equip youth workers. "We want adults who love kids and love God. If you want to reach 1,000 kids, you've got to have 100 workers."

First Church, Jacksonville, Fla., ranked third in youth baptisms last year with 181.

Nearly 200 lay people work in the church's youth ministry, said Calvin Carr, high school youth educational director. About 950

youths attend the church's Sunday School.

"We have trained, excited, evangelistic youth workers," Carr said. "With a host of leadership, we can touch a larger number of youth."

"We hold our youth workers to high standards, and they rise to the occasion," Carr added.

Some expectations are that workers will visit youths every week, attend Wednesday night leaders meeting, be involved in ongoing training, and attend youth activities.

Volunteers commit themselves to the youth ministry, Carr said, because they share the "excitement of influencing young people who have the chance to live their entire lives for Jesus Christ."

#### Other reasons cited

Other reasons for the decline in youth baptisms, according to Finley and Richard Leach, HMB associate director of church growth and evangelism, are:

- No strategy for reaching youths. "A church needs to be able to articulate its plan for reaching teenagers," Leach said.

- Attitude that youths need to determine their own religion. Some parents say "religion is a deeply personal decision" so they do not share their religious convictions with their children.

- Pastors who do not support youth ministries. Pastors should

periodically use sermon illustrations designed for teens and participate in youth activities to let youths know they are an important part of the church.

- Peer pressure against religion. However, Finley said that's

changing. "It's becoming OK to be a Christian and to be morally pure," he explained.

"Society is giving teenagers permission to take a stand for the right thing," he pointed out.

Zimmerman writes for Home Mission Board.



Source: SBC Home Mission Board

## Experts advise...

# Successful youth ministries should combine fun, evangelism

By Sarah Zimmerman

**ATLANTA (BP)** — Youth ministers at churches that lead the Southern Baptist Convention in youth baptisms say they plan a lot of fun activities, but evangelism is the bottom line in all their events.

"Activities, fellowships, and trips are all good and we do them, but we have to keep the main thing the main thing," said Calvin Carr, high school youth educational director at First Church, Jacksonville, Fla.

While planning activities, Carr said youth leaders discuss how to share Christ during the event. "Our young people know if they bring their friends to anything, they will hear the gospel."

The constant presentation of the gospel also helps train young people to witness, Carr said.

John Cope, pastor to students at First Church, Springdale, Ark., said his strategy is to concentrate on doing the basics well. He described the basics as reaching youths, caring for them, and teaching them.

"Build a hub and put a little glitter on that," Cope said. Sunday School is the base of the youth ministry at First Church, Cope said. "We try to make it real exciting, real enthusiastic. If we make them enjoy it, maybe they'll eventually love God."

Youths won't come to church if it's not interesting, said Jay Singleton, junior high youth minister at Cascade Hills Church, Columbus, Ga.

"They come to fellowship and have fun with their friends. That's when they're comfortable, and that's when you can reach them," Singleton said. "No matter how much fun or how crazy we get, it all boils down to Jesus and the Bible."

Some of the youth ministers' ideas for creative outreach include:

- Witness Wear Wednesday. Youth wear T-shirts with a Christian message to school. The clothing generates discussion about church and Christianity.

- Advertise on movie theater screens before the show starts. "Our message is the same, but we're willing to change our methods to reach this generation," said Bill Purvis, pastor of Cascade Hills Church.

- Go to schools to have lunch with teens.

- Host a lock-in somewhere other than the church.

- Constant contact. "We're always on the phone, writing cards, going to football games, letting them know we care," Singleton said.

- Prayer. Each Thursday, nearly 70 students meet at First Church, Springdale, to pray for fellow students. In three years, Sunday morning youth attendance at the church has grown from 200 to 450, Cope said.

Students pray for youths who visited Sunday School the previous week and stu-

dents on the Sunday School rolls. Each week students pray for six or eight youths, Cope said. Students wad up the list, put it in their sock, and pray for people on the list during the day as they feel the paper in their sock.

The peak times for youth activities, other than summer, are from the second week in September through Thanksgiving and from February through April, Cope said.

Zimmerman writes for Home Mission

## Home Mission Board confident of "Here's Hope" baptism upswing

**NASHVILLE (BP)** — After two years of decline, Southern Baptists can expect a 2% increase in baptisms in 1994, according to an estimate by the Home Mission Board research division.

The estimate, based on information from state evangelism directors, indicates 356,000 baptisms in 1994, compared to 349,073 in 1993.

"This is a good turn, and I think 1995 will be up even more than that because of Here's Hope," said Darrell Robinson, HMB vice president for evangelism.

"Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" is the theme of a simultaneous witnessing effort scheduled for Jan. 9 to March 9.

Southern Baptists are asked to share Christ once a day during those 60 days.

Churches are asked to follow up with revivals in which new Christians are encouraged to make their decisions public.

Robinson attributed the 1994 projected increase in baptisms to preparation for Here's Hope. "When you make evangelism a priority, it happens," he said.

HMB President Larry Lewis said his dream is Southern Baptists will baptize 500,000 people next year as a result of the simultaneous witnessing effort.

"Anybody who seriously makes an attempt to share Christ every day for 60 days will want to do it the rest of their lives," Lewis said. "We're hoping to shape a new mindset in Southern Baptists."

Next year is the 150th birthday of the Southern Baptist Convention and Home and Foreign mission boards.

"'Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now' is the greatest challenge we've ever had in our history," Lewis said.

"I hope we enter a new era with the main thing as the main thing," he added.

# HouSETOPS

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 15, 1994

HouseTops is a supplement to the **Baptist Record** and is produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## "HINDRANCES FAIL TO THWART ZIMBABWE MISSION TEAM!"

Can the potential of a mission be measured by the number of hindrances it encounters? This seemed to be the case with a Partnership Missions Team in Zimbabwe, Sept. 19 - Oct. 6, 1994. The team was composed of the following Mississippians: Bill Kent (Meadville), Jimmy Kettleman (McAfee), Tommy and Carla Purvis (Belmont), and Wagoner (Kosciusko). Joining them were C. Routh (Greensboro, North Carolina) and J.W. Burline Selman (Amarillo, Texas).

Approximately 45 minutes out of Boston (over the Atlantic) the flight to London was forced to return, due to a fuel problem. After dumping fuel, relanding, and reloading, they were enroute for a three hour delay. Following a less-than-planned "whiz-tour" of London, the team headed back to the airport only to encounter another delay. The flight to Harare, Zimbabwe, had been delayed because Zimbabwe was on strike. Delayed another four hours, the team was on its way—via Paris, Rome, and Luanda, Angola.

Greeted by Isaac Chigede (national president), Dewey and Betty Merritt (host missionaries), Barry Robinson (career missionary), the team completed a 16-hour orientation in eight hours. Following orientation and a brief rest, they visited two game parks outside Harare. The mission before-the real mission: to see the White Rhinos (endangered species).

After encounters with cheetahs, lions, giraffes, monkeys, zebras, and several species of antelopes, seven rhinos appeared near a lake 100 meters away. When the rhinos stopped to graze, the team moved a bit closer and their van immediately sank into a hidden soft spot. Startled by the commotion the rhinos advanced—heads and horns lifted, especially the two with babies. Cautiously, some of the team members got out, but were unsuccessful in pushing the van out. As some of the rhinos continued to approach and the sun went down, the team members settled "inside."



Mississippi Volunteers' van stuck near approaching White Rhinos.

the van for what could have been a long night.

After praying, the emergency flashers were turned on. Team members began to share their testimonies of how God had brought them to this "place" in their spiritual pilgrimage. An unusual bonding began to occur. About one hour of darkness passed, as the mosquitos and other blood-hungry insects approached in increasing numbers.

keside was a natural habitat, and the van's attractiveness attracted them.

Later, a light shined through the bush, and a ranger approached carrying three park rangers. One of them walked toward the van, carrying an AK-47. After a cautious greeting, the team members stated their identities and purpose. Immediately, an atmosphere of friendliness and helpfulness developed. Answered prayers.

The ranger, however, could not pull the deadly rifle out of his gun. The ranger with the AK-47 stayed with the team, while the others went for a tractor. Another hour or so passed.... But, the time was not wasted. The ranger, Jonah, informed the team that he knew about Jesus but had never committed his life to him. As a matter of fact, he knew quite a lot "about" the Bible message.

Jonah, however, expressed an honest hesitancy to believe Jesus as Savior. He seemed to grasp the claim on the life of one who professes Jesus as Savior and Lord! Eventually, he invited Dewey Merritt to visit his home. Asking for a Bible, Jonah said, "When you come I will invite my family and friends. We will listen to your testimony and consider your teaching."

Can the potential of a mission be measured by the number of hindrances it encounters? The flight delays and being stuck in that "rhino-pit" provided a witness to an unexpected and potential recipient of the gospel. The encounter with Jonah became another open window for spreading the gospel in Zimbabwe.

Encouraged by their experience, the team arrived safely at the Mississippi House in Harare (about midnight). Following a good night's rest, they divided into three groups and served in the following areas: Bulawayo, Masvingo, and Zvimba. The teams witnessed in homes, gave testimonies and preached in

public schools, and led in evening worship services. They witnessed a dynamic moving of the Holy Spirit in spite of automobile and movie projector breakdowns.

There were 509 professions of faith in the homes and evening worship services. These will be discipled, baptized, and incorporated into local churches. In the schools, 848 students made public professions of faith and will receive twice-monthly discipleship training from local church leaders. In addition, there were numerous rededications and commitments to various forms of Christian service. Finally, two churches were started and one was strengthened in its ministry.



Bobby Douglas (DOM, Attala Baptist Association) witnesses to Jonah, a park ranger who came to the rescue of stranded Mississippi Volunteers.

Can the potential of a mission be measured by the number of hindrances it encounters? You decide! Then, become a part of Mississippi Baptists' Partnership Missions Team, obeying Jesus' command: "... you shall be My witnesses... to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8, NASB).

By Tommy Purvis (Pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Belmont, Miss. and team member)

Participate in a trip to Zimbabwe! Ridge Shores Park and Campground, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Ask the office for details. \$610. Deposit due now. Firm arrangements. All nights accommodations and conference fees included. WMU #651.

*pray this day.....*

**January 1-15, 1995**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
That our churches will plan to participate in these special efforts that are being planned for us	That we ourselves will be willing to participate	That church staff members will become familiar with all the plans and materials provided by our denomination	That pastors will be willing to lead out in the 60 days of witnessing planned for January 9 through March 9	That God will prepare the hearts of those to whom He wants a witness to be made during these special 60 days	That church members will dedicate themselves to be able to have the time and the energy to witness and to attend the revivals planned for this convention-wide emphasis	For church leadership as they enlist members to become involved
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
For church leadership as they enlist revival preachers and revival musicians	For local choirs, organists, pianists, and other musicians as they begin to prepare for revival time	For church secretaries as they help in the promotion of revivals	For people who will be involved in nursery and childcare as their ministry during revivals	For the lost in your community to be in attendance to hear the gospel	For your willingness to be used to get them there	For churches to be willing to provide every kind of support necessary for the revivals
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
For those who will be won in the witnessing and revivals, that the church they become a member of will be what it needs to be	Telling other people the difference your faith in Jesus Christ makes in your life, helping them to see that their lives can change. The first quarter of 1995 is dedicated by our state convention to special witnessing and revival efforts under the leadership of the evangelism departments of state conventions...let's pray.					
16						



**Auditions •**  
**February 6-28, 1995**  
 5:00-7:00 p.m. weekdays  
 9:00-11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. Saturdays  
**12th Graders**

- February 6, 1995 - First United Methodist Church, Oxford
- February 7, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Tupelo
- February 8, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Jackson
- February 9, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Vicksburg
- February 10, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Meridian
- February 11, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 12, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 13, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Clarksdale
- February 14, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 15, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 16, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 17, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 18, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 19, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 20, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 21, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 22, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 23, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 24, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 25, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 26, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth
- February 27, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Kosciusko
- February 28, 1995 - First Baptist Church, Corinth

**Audi**



# MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST Recreator NEWS

## Rec-Lab

Lake Yale Assembly  
Eustis, Florida  
January 6-12, 1995

Rec-Lab is a unique time of training in all areas of Church Recreation. A special feature of Rec-Lab this year is the Senior Adult Leadership Lab (for all who work with Senior Adults). Several Mississippi Baptist Staff members are getting together to share rides to Lake Yale. If you would like more information call our church recreation consultant, Wes Pegues, at the Baptist Building.

### Please Note this Key change....

The 1995 Keyboard festival scheduled on January 28, 9:30 a.m.-Noon, at FBC, Cleveland has been moved to Second Baptist Church, Greenville. The Festival leader will be Curtis Hancher. If you would like more information please contact Curtis at 335-3343 or call the Church Ministry Building, Baptist Building at 1-800-248-1651.



**CREATED  
TO BE  
Creative**

**CHRISTIAN  
PERFORMING  
ARTS FESTIVAL**  
**FEBRUARY 3-4, 1995**

**WOODLAND HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH  
JACKSON, MISS.**

"Created to Be Creative" is the theme, once again, for the Christian Performing Arts Festival. The Festival features training conferences in drama, puppetry, and clowning. We have added the area of Church Recreation to this year's festival. There will be several conferences covering the different aspects of a church recreation program. This year's Festival features "FISHWORKS", a drama troop from Decatur, Georgia. We have invited an "all star" cast of conference leaders who will provide basic training for the beginner and advanced training for the experienced. If you would like more information about this year's festival call the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at the Baptist Building.

LOOKING FOR A LITTLE MORE HELP WITH  
Winter Bible Study?

LOOK INTO

### LAY BIBLE ACADEMY

Galatians/Ephesians/Philippians now available. The cost is \$14.95 (including shipping and handling) for the study guide and cassette tapes. Contact: Seminary Extension, 901 Commerce St, Suite 500, Nashville, TN 37203-3631 or Phone (615) 242-2453.

LAY

BIBLE

ACADEMY

We accept Visa and MasterCard. Other courses available: Genesis, Gospels I, Gospels II

## CHURCH BUSINESS ADMINISTRATORS CONFERENCE

This conference is jointly sponsored by the Department of Christian-Pastoral Ministries, MBCB, and Metro

**PURPOSE:** Dealing with issues concerning risk to our churches in the areas of child abuse, personal and property security.

**ATT AUDIENCE:** Church Business Administrators, Church Staff, Personnel Committee Members, Child Care Personnel, Housekeeping Staff and Building and Grounds Committee Members.

**FINANCES:** There is no charge for the conference. (You will be on your own for lunch.)



**SPEAKER:**  
John L. Dudley, Vice President, Property and Casualty Department, Annuity Board, Dallas, Texas. Member and deacon of First Baptist Church, Rockwall, Texas.

<b>AGENDA</b>	
9:00	Registration
9:15	Welcome, Prayer and Introduction
9:20	Morning Session
	<i>"Reducing the Risk: Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse"</i>
10:30	Break
10:45	Morning Session continued
11:45	Lunch
1:00	Afternoon Sessions: A. Property Management B. Security Issues
2:00	Break
2:30	Afternoon Sessions continued: B. Property Management A. Security Issues
3:30	Adjourn

For further information, contact: Julius Thompson, 968-3800, ext. 3908 or Barry Hardy, Broadmoor Baptist Church, 366-8433.

### Suggested Christmas Family Worship

#### Celebration of Love - The Sunday before Christmas

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

When we use the word "love" it can mean many different things. We love ice cream. We love our families, we love our spouse, we love our children. Love, at its best, is the ultimate limit of human affection and loyalty. We must understand love and know God is our He sent Jesus as the Messiah, love became a person.

Monday - 1 John 4:16-21

Tuesday - Matthew 5:43-48

Wednesday - Luke 10:30-37

Thursday - 1 Corinthians 13:1-8

Friday - John 21:15-17

Saturday - Galatians 4:45

#### Suggested Family Activities:

Consider several ways your family can show God's love to others during the coming year. Make a list of how God has been good to the family during the past year.

amilies with small children may enjoy bringing popcorn and berries together, then hanging the string outdoors for the birds. Discuss God's love for us and that He made the world and everything in it. We are to care for His world, love one another and be kind to the animals.

### Christmas Day

Read the Christmas story: Luke 2:1-20

Celebrate the fulfilling of God's promise. The Messiah comes! God's great gift of love is expressed in His Son.

Song: "Joy to the World! The Lord is Come"

Jesus came to save people everywhere.

He came to: heal forgive help free

peace joy love life

#### Suggested Family Activities:

Have a time of sharing telling what the words above mean to each member.

Close in a prayer of your choice.

# WHO DO YOU SEE?

**SEE YOUR YOUTH** (10th-12th graders) singing solos, leading hymns, and/or playing their instruments for a panel of ministers of music; receiving their encouraging comments; and possibly being invited to participate in the State Youth Four Part Festival, February 25.



## VOCAL FESTIVAL

\* Sing two selections



## CONDUCTING FESTIVAL

\* Direct three hymns or conduct instrumental ensemble (one piece)



## INSTRUMENTAL FESTIVAL

\* (Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Pitched Percussion) Play a solo or ensemble

\* For preparation information and registration forms, refer to your 1995 Youth Music Ministry Book or contact your Church Music Department at 968-3800.

### AREA CONDUCTING, INSTRUMENTAL, VOCAL FESTIVALS

Monday, January 16, 6:00-8:00 p.m., University Baptist Church, Hattiesburg; Tuesday, January 17, 6:00-8:00 p.m., North Oxford Baptist Church, Oxford; Tuesday, January 17, 6:00-8:00 p.m., Baptist Building, Jackson

### SEE YOUR YOUTH Receiving Scholarships

Partial scholarships to Gulfshore, Ridgecrest or Glorieta Music Conferences \$200.00 college music scholarships (Doubled when used at a Mississippi Baptist college)

### SEE YOUR YOUTH singing, leading hymns and playing instruments in their own home churches!

**YOUTH EVANGELISM CONFERENCE**  
Mississippi College, Clinton, Miss.

*Spread the Fire of*

**HIS LOVE**

December 29-30, 1994

### REGISTRATION FORM

Youth Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_

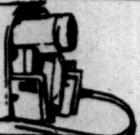
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Lodging During Conference \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_ X \$5.00 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Amount enclosed)

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# Letters to the editor



## Letters to the Editor policy

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

All correspondence is subject to editing. Letters must be limited to 250 words.

No more than one letter will be printed during a 3-month period from any individual. Each correspondent must include an address and the name of his or her church.

When in the judgment of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with that subject will be terminated.

In special instances, when to identify the writer of a letter might cause undue embarrassment, the name will be withheld.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

## Thanks from far away

**Editor:**

Thank you for publishing our 800 number in your paper. We have already been receiving calls concerning ministry opportunities, and those moving to the Boston, Mass., area. We have found it to be most helpful to our work here. The number is for those who will be visiting the area, or moving to the area and looking for a church. We also welcome calls from those interested in volunteer and full-time ministry. The number is (800) 449-4008.

Ignatius Meimaris, DOM  
Greater Boston Association

## Iuka church growing

**Editor:**

Headline: "Northeast Mississippi Pastor Plastered by Jack Daniels."

New Prospect Church in Iuka had a hallelujah party for all the church members. They had fun and games for all the church members.

The young people went on a scavenger hunt and the objects they were to bring back were items taken from the Bible. The team that brought the most items back got the opportunity of hitting the pastor, Doug Christie, in the face with a cream pie.

The winning team elected their

leader to do the honors. The leader is a deacon in the church and he "plastered" Doug with the cream pie.

By the way, the deacon's name is Jack Daniels! Isn't it amazing how headlines can deceive you!

God is blessing New Prospect Church every week. He has given us 55 additions this past church year, with 28 of them professions of faith. Praise the Lord!

Jerry Swimmer  
Iuka

## Prayer for outreach

**Editor:**

Many of us received a form letter from Billy Graham last week in which he wrote of an "attempt to reach millions — and perhaps even more than a billion people — for Christ in the next four months." Of course, he was writing about "Global Mission," a crusade that will originate from San Juan, Puerto Rico, March 16-18, 1995. High-tech will make it possible to conduct several thousand simultaneous crusades in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. Millions of people will come to stadiums, cathedrals, cinemas, city auditoriums, and open fields to hear the gospel preached. Other millions in weeks immediately after the crusade will hear the good news via videotape.

I hope many Southern Baptist churches across the nation will

declare Jan. 8, 1995, "Prayer for Global Mission Day." Please help me promote this project.

I was born and reared in Kosciusko, educated at William Carey (College), and pastored in Bond (near Wiggins) and in Long Beach.

Jimmy Coleman, pastor  
Southside Baptist Church  
Janesville, Wisc.

## Church needs pastor

**Editor:**

The Kitzingen/Wurzburg Baptist Church in Kitzingen, Germany, is in need of a pastor. The congregation is mainly people connected with the American military. Our church is affiliated with the European Baptist Convention (English language) and is founded on the principles of the Southern Baptist Convention. If God is leading you to pastor in a missions setting, please contact: Thad Everage, E Co. 703D MSB, Unit 26134 Box 47, APO, AE 09031.

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Thad Everage, chairman  
Pastor Search committee  
Kitzingen, Germany

## Prayers answered

**Editor:**

Only the Holy Spirit can convey to all of you our intense gratitude for your effectual fervent prayer in our behalf during Jim's open heart surgery for six bypasses!

Jim's recovery is progressing well.

We have been overwhelmed by your love and concern.

May the Lord help us to fulfill the purpose for which he has spared us.

Jim and Sarah Haggard  
Louisville

## Per capita gifts excel

**Editor:**

I read with interest the article about Saddleback Valley Community Church (in Laguna Hills, Calif., — *Baptist Record*, Dec. 8) which raised \$23.5 million in cash and commitments on one weekend. This is impressive.

However, our church, Highland Colony Church of Ridgeland, did even better than this in proportion to our attendance. We are less than one year old, meet in a school building, and have grown to having about 90 in attendance.

Our attendance of 90 is 1% of the attendance at Saddleback Valley Church. We pledged \$300,000 in one week. Our pledge per person attending was about \$3,333. Theirs was only \$2,611.

Our challenge is to have 9,000 in attendance when we are 14 years old. With our present spirit we will exceed this!

Ray A. Thompson  
Jackson

## Bypass SBC

**Editor:**

I have just read your editorial regarding the needy annuitants in our convention ("Remember your leaders," *Baptist Record*, Nov. 17). As too often, I am again nauseated by such a base lack of moral integrity demonstrated by the "powers in control" of the Southern Baptist Convention.

As of Nov. 28, there were 1,506 needy retired individuals who received an additional \$50 because of the designated gifts to the Adopt-an-Annuitant program being operated by the Annuity Board's endowment fund for that purpose. Imagine the needy retirees who would be receiving an additional \$50 each month if the \$25,000.00-plus from the

Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF) had not been cut off. Instead there is the likelihood some will have to be dropped.

Please note this testimony: "James 1:27 reminds us that pure and undefiled religion is to 'visit orphans and widows in their troubles.'" One individual's response was, "I am one of the widows."

There are a number of persons who are volunteers representing this need to churches, Sunday School classes, associations, pastors' conferences, and individuals in Mississippi. There is a by-pass to the roadblock established by the SBC. Any of these can send their contributions directly to the Annuity Board's Adopt-an-Annuitant Endowment Fund, 2401 Cedar Springs Rd., Box 2190, Dallas, TX 75221-2190.

NO ONE can tell "Baptist" churches where they can send their money. A church, regardless of its affiliation — CBF or otherwise — can send their mission offerings, including the Annuity Board, directly to the Executive Committee of the SBC, 901 Commerce St., #600, Nashville, TN 37203, and designate it to the agency of their choice. The convention action only affected money given through CBF, not churches, church organizations, and individuals.

Thank you, editor, for your alertness to this problem and your willingness to address it.

Odis Henderson  
Merigold

## Growing Churches mag gets new format, new life

NASHVILLE — Growing Churches magazine, scheduled to be discontinued during 1994, has found new life, new content, and the appearance of a professional journal. With the 1995 winter issue, the quarterly magazine has been redesigned with more emphasis upon specific help for leaders who want their churches to grow, according to Baptist Sunday School Board officials.

Michael D. Miller, director of the church leadership services

division and Growing Churches editor, said the magazine has been prepared as a professional journal for easier reading, with more news and innovations from churches experiencing numerical growth, as well as spiritual growth, expansion of ministries and missions, throughout the nation.

"We have enlisted church growth leaders and authorities to write for the magazine," reported Miller. "The cover story interview in the winter issue features a leading church growth pioneer, C. Peter Wagner, professor of church growth at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. This insightful interview is an example of our efforts to provide the finest leadership information that will help churches to grow," he said.

"Also, we have discovered there are hundreds of stories of churches and associations — large and small — that are growing in a variety of ways and their stories need to be told," Miller said. "In every issue, we will ask readers to give us feedback on what they like and don't like and tell us what will help them most."

The winter 1995 issue is available during November and December and can be ordered on the church literature order form, or by calling (800) 458-2772.

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Dear Mississippi Baptists,

Please accept this deepest most heart-felt note of gratitude for Mississippi Baptists. It has been a real blessing and distinct privilege to work with and serve you this year. 1994 was our best year so far in Music Evangelism, wherein we ministered 52 weeks, and 1995 holds 44 weeks scheduled to date. We, as a family, praise the Lord for this, and are convinced this is because so many of you are praying for us regularly. We are indeed grateful. May God grant you a prosperous and fruitful new year.

Please call us if you need us for ministry in the fall of 1995, or 1996.

The Brad Jones Family



## Just for the Record



New Hope Church, Foxworth, recently held a recognition service for its missions organizations. Participants in Mission Friends who received awards (top photo, left to right) were: first row, Mitch Ratliff, Carissa Clark, Taryn Bernier, Brittany Stringer, Davy Stringer; second row, leader Beverly Kroner, Megan Stringer, Carley Lowe, Shannon Haney, Kayla Turnage, and leader Kim Turnage. GAs who were recognized (middle photo) were: first row, Danielle Barnes, Karla Ratliff, Halee Daughdrill; second row, Amy Lowery, Lauren Haney, Courtney Stringer, Becky Barnes, Christie Stringer; third row, Ashley Turnage, Carrie Stringer, Jessica Stringer, Crystal Barnes, and Tiffany Kroner. RAs recognized (above) were: first row, Charles Morgan, Jeff Lowe, Jeremy Stringer; second row, Scott Bennett, Corey Stringer, Darren Lee, and Cade Campbell.

### Staff Changes

Wade Church, Pascagoula, has called Philip Price as minister of music and youth, effective Nov. 9. His previous place of service was South Anchorage Church, Anchorage, Alaska. Price received his education at Price William Carey College, Hattiesburg; and New Orleans Seminary.



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If you seek a challenge and are qualified please submit your resume with salary history to: VP Search Committee, Human Resources Department, Baptist Sunday School Board, 127 Ninth Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37234.

Crestview Church, Petal, will present its live nativity scene on Dec. 21, 6-10 p.m.

West Ellisville Church, Ellisville, will present a drive-through live nativity scene on Dec. 19 and 20, from 6-8 p.m. Donations for a missions offering will be accepted. Dwight L. Smith is pastor.

Country Woods Church, Jackson, will present a living nativity scene Dec. 16-18 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Edward L. Mahaffey is pastor.

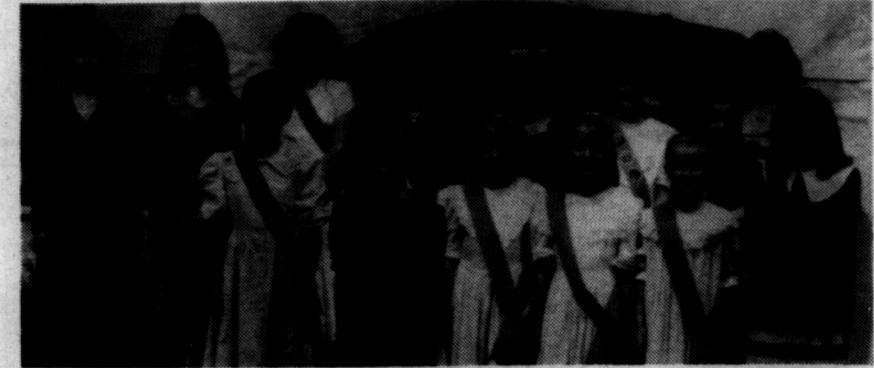
Antioch Church, Brandon, will combine its children's choirs, youth handbells, and adult choir to present its Christmas program on Dec. 18 at 6 p.m. Bonnie and Cynthia Stuart serve as music directors; Marion Spence is pastor.

Sunrise Church, Carthage (Leake Association), had an ingathering for its Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions on Dec. 11. The church exceeded its goal of \$2,000 by \$1,015, for a total gift of \$3,015. The church also reports that it was named by the Baptist Sunday School Board as the No. 1 in the state for mission study course awards.

First Church, Holly Springs, will present its choir in a "Christmas Dinner Theatre" on Dec. 17 and 18 at 6:30 p.m. in the Christian activity center. A catered dinner will be followed by an hour and a half of religious and secular music. Tickets are \$8 per person, and will be sold in advance on a first-come basis. For more information, contact the church at (601) 252-2627. Thad Moore is pastor.

### Missionary News

**Donald and Barbara Ann Phlegar**, Mississippi missionaries to Thailand, retired Nov. 22. They have returned to the States for their final furlough. Their address is: 137 Melrose, Jackson, MS 39211.



First Church, Aberdeen, held a recognition service Nov. 6 for its missions organizations under the theme "God's Rainbow." Twelve GAs (top photo) received badges. Their director is Barbara Russell; leaders are Nancy Hawkins, Patti Swearigen, and Gail Smith. Actees (above) who achieved the queen level were Rachel Wright, Angie Whitworth, Nikki Peugh, Kylie Patterson, Chrissy Miller, and Deanna Clardy. Shane Hawkins and Dana Clardy achieved queen regent level. Linda Davis is Acteen director; leaders are Stephanie Herrmann, Johnnie Foster, and Millie Hyder. Older Mission Friends served as attendants. Their director is Linnie Stone; leaders are Patsy Ferguson, DeAnna Roberts, Candy Baldwin, Tonia Clemmons, and Brenda Roebuck. Roy McHenry is interim pastor.



### LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ed.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

LifeAnswers is on temporary hiatus. The column will return in the January 12 issue of *The Baptist Record*.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

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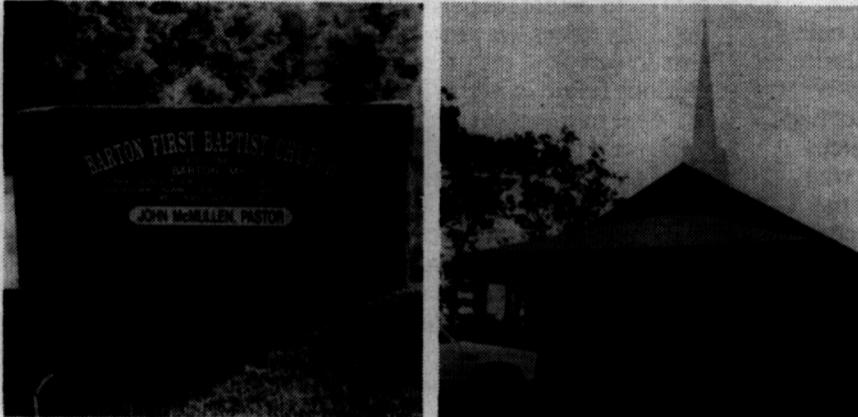
#### VICE PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH:

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Quent Mauney (above, right) receives from a salesman the keys to the new van donated to Barton First Church (pictured below) by Mauney's brother Morton of Michigan. Mr. and Mrs. Morton Mauney were not Christians at the time of their gift, but have since received Christ.



## Barton First Church, Byhalia, credits great growth to prayer

Barton First Church is located near Byhalia in Marshall County. The community has experienced all that most other communities have, but the church has shown an amazing vitality.

In 1992 Barton, First had 86 enrolled in Sunday School and a year later there were 190 enrolled. The church baptized 30 in 1993 and 120 in 1994. Discipleship Training enrollment has

grown from 33 to 97.

The people are not only faithful in attendance but they are also faithful in giving. The church budget doubled in two years — from \$35,963 to \$80,000.

Pastor John McMullen says that prayer is the reason for this church growth. "Several members come to the church every Thursday night and pray for their church, the bus ministry, and for the pastor."

Don Stanfill, director of missions for Marshall and Lafayette Associations, said the growth pattern is "beyond human explanation and is totally a work of God. It's just a small group of people with hearts aflame. They began reaching a few young people who knew other young people and it was like a snowball. They may have 150 kids there for Bible study. The pastor has a passion for souls. You put it all together and you have a growing church." — GH

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Thursday, December 15, 1994

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 2

## "Tom & Susan's" case problem illustrates missionary quandry

*(The Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va., uses case studies such as the following to help new missionaries develop cultural sensitivity. Each case study describes a situation that actually occurred; the names of the participants are changed. There is no actual closure to this story; it ends as a "what would you do.")*

ROCKVILLE, Va. (BP) — Tom and Susan arrived on the field and immediately began studying French. Both learned French rapidly and after the first trimester, both were placed a class ahead.

During the first six months, Tom, Susan, and their two children became friends with a French pastor and his family. Pastor Francois and Anne, his wife, had very much in common with Tom and Susan. Since they were so compatible as couples, they spent a lot of time together during the first year of study.

Tom and Pastor Francois were very evangelistic and had similar conservative theologies. Pastor Francois invited Tom to go on a church member visitation with him. It was a special time for Tom as he sought to "fit in" in the French community.

After some time, Pastor Fran-

### SBC chaplain forced to retire

ATLANTA (BP) — A Southern Baptist chaplain who challenged the use of military force in the Persian Gulf in 1991 has been forced to retire, but he will receive full retirement benefits.

Garland Robertson's retirement was effective Dec. 1, said Lew Dawson, associate director of the Home Mission Board's chaplaincy division.

Robertson was stationed at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene, Texas, in 1991 when he wrote a letter to the local newspaper questioning the use of military force to evict Iraqi soldiers from Kuwait.

Robertson was reprimanded for public disagreement with the military action. Robertson later said chaplains "must be allowed to speak out on legitimate concerns."

The secretary of the Air Force made the decision that forced Robertson to retire but allowed him to keep his benefits.

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cois felt comfortable inviting Tom and Susan to accompany Anne and himself on an evangelistic visit to the home of the mayor of their town. Recently the mayor and his wife had shown some interest and openness to the gospel. Pastor Francois believed this visit would be pivotal in leading the mayor and his wife to faith in Christ. Tom and Susan realized this was a privilege and an honor to be asked to go.

When the two families arrived at the mayor's home, the mayor's wife welcomed the guests with glasses of wine. Tom and Susan refused to drink the wine and stated, "As Christians we do not drink wine," and then politely asked for water. All except Tom and Susan were somewhat confused by this initial scene.

As the meal was served, each course was accompanied by a

glass of the mayor's finest wine. Each time the wine was served, Tom and Susan refused while the rest courteously drank theirs.

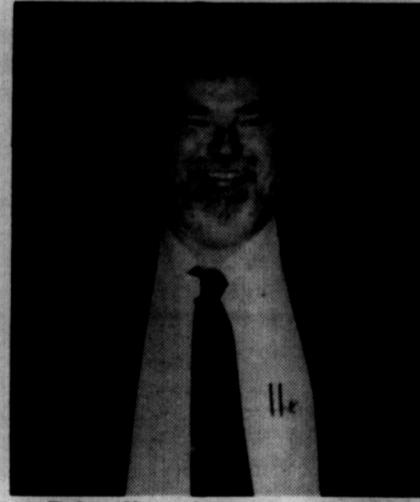
When the meal was finished, all were directed to the sitting room for conversation and the final glass of wine. As the wine was being poured, the mayor turned to Tom and Susan, who again had refused the hospitality of the wine, and said, "How is it that Pastor Francois and Anne, who are dedicated Christians, drink my wine, but you and your wife have refused my special wine by stating as Christians you do not drink wine? Please explain the difference between your Christianity and that of Pastor Francois and Anne's."

Glancing at Susan, Tom caught the strained look on Pastor Francois and Anne's faces. Then Tom turned to the mayor and said....

## Names in the News



Holcomb Church, Grenada Association, recently ordained Lynn Carpenter (left) and Stanley Turner (right) as deacons. Randy Ashley (center) is pastor.



Eric Naquin was recently ordained to the ministry by the Wanilla Church, Lawrence Association. Naquin is pastor of Big Springs Church, Lincoln Association.



Alma Whitley was recently recognized for 46 years of service as Sunday School secretary at Paul Truitt Memorial Church, Pearl. During those 46 years, Whitley had a perfect attendance record.

Chaplain Sonny Moore, former Mississippi pastor for 16 years, was recently reassigned to the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. Moore will serve as Protestant chaplain to the 4,100 members of the corps of cadets. Moore and his wife Martha are natives of Lambert.

## Uniform Jesus is born



By Richard Bradley  
Matthew 1

This lesson's verse to remember is truly a verse for the ages: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel" (v. 23). In this verse, God promises that he will be with us. How would he come? God would not come in all his heavenly splendor, clothed in regal robes of glory, and wearing heaven's crown. No, God would come as a mere mortal. He would experience life to the fullest and allow himself to be subjected to all of those experiences that make life what it is for us.

Today, we can express thanks to God that Jesus' birth assures all believers of his presence. God was not only present in Jesus when he was born to Mary in a stable, he is still with us today and has promised to never leave nor forsake us (Matt. 28:20). When God came, he stayed!

**Mary's supernatural conception** (v. 18). Mary, who was engaged to be married to Joseph, became pregnant by an act of the Holy Spirit. One old saint of another generation once observed, "We regard some truths as so true that they lose the power of truth and lie bedridden in the dormitory of the soul!" I think I know what he meant. If we are not careful, we can become so familiar with certain biblical truths that they begin to lose their fascination for us. This must never be the case with the virgin birth of Christ.

Certain liberal commentators have written for years that the virgin birth of Christ is one of those doctrines which we can merely take or leave. However, from this writer's perspective, the virgin birth of Christ is absolutely necessary in that this wonderful, exciting truth is the very thing which makes Jesus' ultimate death on the cross the propitiatory event that it was. If Jesus was not born of a virgin, if he was not who he claimed to be, his death would have been, at best, merely a good example or a statement of compassion. Additionally, if the biblical record could be wrong at this point, where else might it also be in error?

**Joseph's vision** (vv. 19-21). When Mary was found to be pregnant, Joseph just wanted the whole matter to go away. While he did not want to publicly disgrace Mary, being a just man, he still felt it necessary to do the right thing. He settled on a quite, private divorce as his course of action.

However, God changed Joseph's plans. He sent an angel to Joseph in a dream who told him to take Mary as his wife and to name their baby boy, Jesus. Further, the angel explained that this would be the long awaited one; the one who would save his people from their sins. The name Jesus is the New Testament equivalent of the Old Testament name, Joshua, and means "the Lord is salvation." He would truly be a savior in every sense of the word.

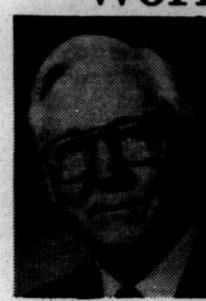
**God's prophecy fulfilled** (vv. 22-23). Matthew explained that Mary's pregnancy fulfilled the prophecy that a virgin would have a son and call his name Emmanuel, which means "God with us." What a wonderful name! What an absolutely incredible thought! God not only loved us so much that he came to us, he actually became one of us.

Many a Hebrew scholar must have puzzled over the prophecy of Immanuel's birth found in Isaiah 7:14. What must it have meant to them? Well, we know what it means to us. Through the fulfillment of this prophecy, we are reminded that God has not only come to us, he will be with us in every situation and circumstance of life. We no longer have to go it alone. God has come to show us the way.

**Joseph's obedient response** (vv. 24-25). What a vision! What a response! As he had been commanded to do, Joseph took Mary as his wife and when the child was born, he was named Jesus. While we don't know a lot about Joseph, we do know of his obedience to the heavenly vision. Because of his obedience, Joseph's life would dramatically change. In submission to God's will, with Mary at his side, Joseph began a difficult and dangerous journey. Joseph was a simple servant, but a great inspiration to everyone who would obey God's guidance. God knows best and has a plan for our lives which is far greater than any plan we could ever devise for ourselves.

Bradley is pastor, Handsboro Church, Gulfport.

## Bible Book Working together



By Raymond Kolb  
Philippians 4

Paul is still concerned about apparent weaknesses in the fellowship of the Philippian church. Again he appeals for unity. This time he mentions the names of some who are disrupting the unity and damaging the good name and influence of the church.

**An appeal to work together in Christ** (vv. 2-3). "Euodia, I call on you, and Syntyche, I call on you, to reach an agreement in the Lord." We know practically nothing about these two women except that they had disagreed about something. Probably each had her feelings hurt and held a grudge against the other. Apparently these were no desire on the part of either to "give in" to the other. Maybe each thought of herself as being better than the other. Paul had laid the groundwork well before mentioning any names. But now he appeals to each of them to quit being a stumbling block in the fellowship, for each to recognize the worth of the other, and for both to act toward each other as sisters in Christ.

We are not given the identity of the "true yokefellow" who was asked to help the two women work out their problem, but it is good to find such people in our churches, people who know how to make peace. The two women had been active in sharing the good news before. With their present attitudes, the bad news was that they could not share the good news.

**An appeal to practice Christlike virtues** (vv. 4-9). Paul's experience in Christ has lifted him to such a degree of happiness that he has to keep on rejoicing in the Lord and he wants other Christians to have the same experience.

"Do not be anxious about anything" (v. 6a). This does not mean that we are not to face problems honestly. Paul was dealing with one in Philippi even as he wrote these words. We must face reality where we are. We should plan, work, and face problems, but not let them "get us down" or make us "fall apart." And, don't try to deal with problems alone. Pray about them and be grateful as they are worked out. Someone has pointed out three great lessons in verse 6. First, don't worry about anything. Second, pray about everything. Third, be thankful for anything. Yes, we are to pray (a general term for addressing God for whatever purpose) and also to make specific requests to God. Never should we make demands. Live in an attitude of gratitude. If we meet these conditions, a promise follows. God's wonderful peace forms a protective wall, or garrison, around our hearts and minds. This peace is greater than anything we could have imagined, but God is happy to give it to us. So, why worry? Rejoice!

In verses 8-9 Paul mentions a number of qualities which are worthy of serious thought and should be put into practice.

**Gratitude for the Philippians' gifts** (vv. 10-19). Paul now mentions another reason for rejoicing, the offering they had sent to him. He is very grateful not only for this gift, but also for others they had sent on various occasions. Financial help from other Christians made it possible for him to give full time to the ministry to which God had called him, but he was also happy to be a bivocational preacher when necessary (Acts 18:1-4). He could be content whether he had much or little. He was grateful when there was plenty, and enjoyed such blessings, but was not discouraged if he had to feel the pangs of hunger. Earlier in this letter he had expressed his gratitude for Epaphroditus who had taken the Philippian offering to him. No electronic banking was available in those days.

Three statements in this section of the letter stand out for many Christians even today. "For I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances" (v. 11b). "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (v. 13). "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (v. 19).

Will you and your church make "a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God," (v. 18b) to help some present-day missionaries carry the same gospel to lost people in different parts of the world at this Christmas season? And as you give, rejoice in the Lord! God loves a cheerful giver!

Kolb is a retired missionary living in Clinton.

## Life and Work Promise of future glory



By Ruth Allen  
Micah 4-5

A prominent deacon told the new pastor a certain man was a "good promiser." After a short while, the pastor found the deacon's statement to be true. One could not rely on the word of the "good promiser." The man would promise to attend certain meetings and would not show up; he would accept certain duties and responsibilities and would fail to discharge them; he would make pledges and would never pay them. He was a "promising member" who proved to be non-dependable. God is a "promiser" who faithfully keeps his promises to all people. God's faithfulness to carry out his promises guarantees all believers a glorious future, sustained by God here on earth and received into heaven at death.

Several interpretations are held concerning the scripture passages in Micah. Some are as follows: 1. Relates to the life and times of Micah and other eighth century prophets. 2. Pictures Judah after the return from Babylonian exile. 3. Describes the messianic period and the consummation of the kingdom of God. Any of the choices of interpretation will ultimately lead to the same conclusion — God promises a glorious future. The study will relate the passages to the promise of the coming of Jesus and the privileges all Christians will enjoy with his presence.

**A glorious future is promised to all nations** (4:3). The word "Gentiles" means "other nations." The Jewish concept was that Israel was the chosen people of God, and the rest of the world was referred to as Gentiles. God had promised that all people, from all of the nations of the world, were included in the plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. Prior to his earthly departure, Jesus told his disciples, "You are to begin in Jerusalem and go to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). God made an all-inclusive promise.

**A glorious period of grace** (4:3). Jesus Christ is the world's only source of peace. The ancient Hebrews greeted their friends with the salutation, "Shalom," which means "peace be unto you." However, when Jesus spoke these words they were more than mere formality or courtesy. They expressed his desire that his friends should have peace from trouble and sorrow, in contrast with their fear of enemies; peace of victory over sin; peace of triumph over death and the grave. It was peace resting on promises fulfilled.

**A glorious sense of security** (4:4). Micah said, "Every person will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid for the Lord Almighty has spoken," (4:4). Jesus reiterated Micah's words of security in John 10:9, "I am the door; if anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out, (i.e. have security) and find pasture." Micah made it abundantly clear that "the Lord Almighty has spoken." God always fulfills his promise.

**A glorious future walking with God** (4:5). There is nothing which has ever surpassed the privilege of companionship with God. What a blessed joy to be accompanied by the presence of God at all times! Through history, princes and princesses have been taught that they were children of the king and, therefore, must always conduct themselves in royal fashion. It should be kept in perpetual remembrance that Christians are the children of the King of Kings. What an uplifting thought, and what a help in the struggle to walk worthy of the love of God!

**A glorious future through the promised Messiah** (5:2, 4). Micah foretold the location of the birthplace of the Messiah. The book of Micah was consulted to ascertain the location when the Magi, men from the east, sought to worship the infant Jesus. The Messiah, who is Jesus Christ, the Lord, came in the majesty and strength of the Almighty God as promised by God through the prophet Micah. Many have claimed the promise of God and have accepted Jesus as Messiah and Lord of their lives. The late Secretary General of the United Nations, Dag Hammarskjold, has stated this fact superbly: "For him who looks to the future, the manger is on Golgotha, the cross has already been raised in Bethlehem." The Babe of Bethlehem has become the crucified Christ, and his redemptive work is God's guarantee of a glorious future for all nations.

Allen lives in Jackson.

# THE VILLAGE VIEW

## The Baptist Children's Village



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## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

**SEPT. 1, 1994-**  
**SEPT. 30, 1994**

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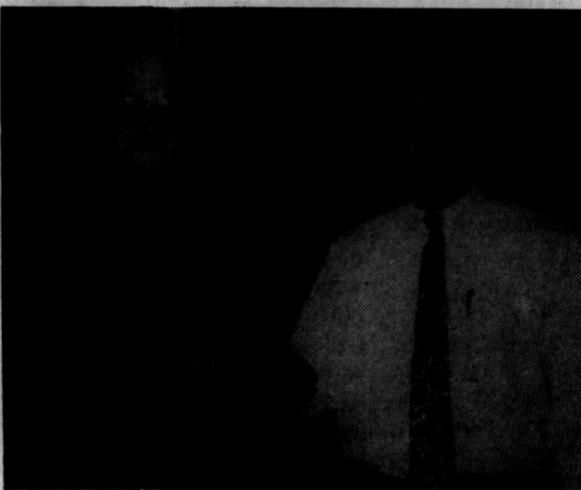
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Mr. Jasper Alexander  
Mrs. J. B. Lewis  
Pattie Allen  
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph A. Rollins  
Mr. Eddy Alley  
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Howard Busby

(to be continued)

## Employees honored for service

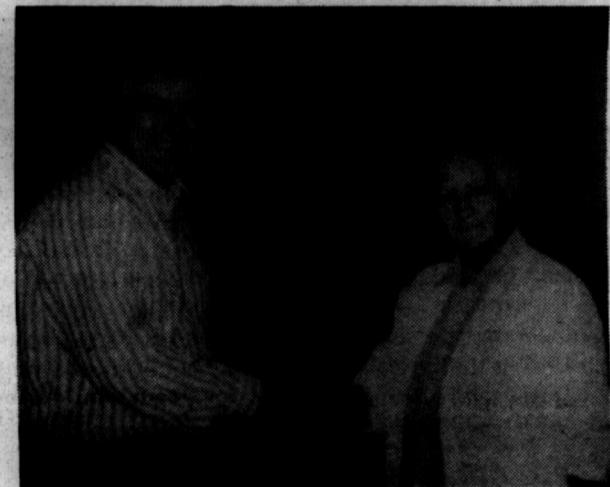
Several staff members recently were awarded service pins and certificates. The Village continues to need additional staff to care for young people on several of our campuses. If you feel the Lord calling you to this type of ministry please call Peggy Taylor at 922-2242 for details.



Mr. Mike Crocker, Unit Director (right) awards Mr. Austin Abbott (left) his 5-year service pin and his Level III Child Care Worker certificate. Mr. Abbott serves as a Child Care Worker on our Farrow Manor Campus in Independence, Mississippi.



Also receiving her 5-year pin and Level III certificate is Mrs. Laura Abbott who serves with her husband on our Farrow Manor Campus.



Miss Georgia Caffey is awarded her 10-year service pin and a Senior Level Child Care Worker certificate by supervisor, Mike Crocker. Miss Caffey cares for children on the Farrow Manor Campus.

Mrs. Betty Knott, who serves as a Child Care Worker on our Reedy Acres Campus in Water Valley, Mississippi, is awarded her 5-year service pin and Level III certificate for her work in Child Care.

## Getting ready for Christmas —

Mississippi College students helped young people in Crestwood Cottage on the India Nunnery Campus prepare their home for the holidays. As you might expect the air is full of excitement!!! Please do remember to pray for staff and young people at The Village during this Christmas season.



The Baptist Children's Village Board of Trustees and their spouses enjoyed an annual Christmas luncheon following their quarterly meeting November 29.



We have not yet met our Christmas budget goal of \$225,000. If you are planning to send a holiday gift and have not yet mailed it, there is still time before the end of the year. Thank you for remembering us.

# capsules

**LIFESAVING CONVERSION:** FORT WORTH (BP) — An airplane once used for drug smuggling has made an amazing turnaround, thanks to the vision and business savvy of a trauma physician from Corpus Christi, Texas. Terry Elder purchased the aircraft a couple of years ago at a government auction of seized property after it had been confiscated by the federal Drug Enforcement Administration. In early November, the plane was loaded with more than \$40,000 worth of water purifiers and well equipment destined for Haiti. Baptist volunteer plumbers will soon arrive to help repair drinking wells destroyed by that country's military — estimated at over 60% of all the usable wells in the entire country. By February 1995, volunteer Baptist medical teams will also be ferried into the country to help supply health needs.

**BROADMAN WITHDRAWS BOOK OVER ALLEGED DOCTRINAL CONCERN:** NASHVILLE (ABP) — In an unusual move, the Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB) has withdrawn plans to publish a book, alleging unspecified doctrinal problems. The book on hermeneutics — or principles of biblical interpretation — was written by Charles Scalise, a former faculty member at Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Scalise now teaches at a branch of Fuller Theological Seminary in Seattle, Wash. "By breaking its contract to publish this book, Broadman and Holman publishers has demonstrated that it is an untrustworthy partner in the ministry of serious evangelical Christian publishing," said Scalise in a prepared statement. John Landers, editor of academic books for BSSB, disputed that the publisher broke the contract. "I would say we withdrew from the contract because we didn't have an acceptable manuscript," he said.

**AFRICAN-AMERICAN DENOMINATIONS GIVE \$112,000 IN RWANDA AID:** WASHINGTON (ABP) — Three African-American Baptist denominations gave a combined \$112,000 for relief work in Rwanda, and pledged another \$50,000 in a Nov. 30 presentation at the Baptist World Alliance headquarters in Washington. Leaders representing the National Baptist Convention U.S.A., Inc.; the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention U.S.A.; and the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc., presented contributions to Baptist World Aid, the relief and development arm of the Baptist World Alliance. African-American Baptists had already given more than \$90,000 for Rwandan relief through other agencies, the leaders noted. "We have been touched by the plight of our Rwandan brothers and sisters," said Norman Smith, chairman of the executive board of the 650,000-member Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention. Smith presented a check to Denton Lotz, general secretary of the Baptist World Alliance, and Paul Montacuto, director of Baptist World Aid.

**FIXED FUND TARGET RANGE ANNOUNCED BY ANNUITY BOARD:** DALLAS (BP) — Officers of the Annuity Board are projecting a 1995 earnings range for the board's Fixed Fund of 5.25% to 6.25%, a slightly higher return than projected for 1994. John R. Jones, senior vice president for fiduciary services, said, "I am glad to note the beginning of an upturn in the projected earnings range following an extended period of falling interest rates." The Fixed Fund credited a cumulative 5.15% through November 1994, which placed it on track for a 1994 performance about mid-point of the projected range of 5.15% to 6.15%.

**2 SCHOOL SYSTEMS CLEAR SUNDAYS, WEDNESDAYS:** SALEM, Ky. (BP) — Kentucky's Ohio River Association has reclaimed Wednesday evenings and Sundays from school activities. The association, comprised of 40 churches in Crittenden and Livingston counties, asked the schools to "re-establish policies which would not create a conflict with the long-established worship times of local churches." The superintendents of schools in the two counties have told school administrators not to schedule activities after 5 p.m. on Wednesdays, nor before 2 p.m. or after 5 p.m. on Sundays, reported John East, the association's director of missions. The campaign began as a concern of Danny Belcher, pastor of Lake City Church, Grand Rivers. Ohio River Association offers information on their efforts. Contact them at Box 9, Salem, KY 42078.

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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C ZCFR AM UCR, WB HVSS RC W DIH AM  
HFIGH: GOJS AS TFCA OZZ HVSA HVOH  
DSFGSQIHS AS, OBR RSZWJSF AS:

DGOZAG GSJSB: CBS

This week's clue: O Equals A.

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Judges Five: Two.

## Mississippi College sponsors teaching opportunity on China's Hainan Island

Edward McMillan, director of international programs at Mississippi College, reports that "Mississippi Baptists have an ideal mission opportunity to spend six weeks teaching and demonstrating lifestyle evangelism to a select group of Chinese during the summer of 1995."

Hainan Island, off the southern coast of China and home to over 6 million people, will be the site of the teaching assignment. The Hainanese people are one of the most unreached people in the world with over 70% of them having never heard the name "Jesus." The few churches there have seen very rapid growth recently but are beset with the typical problems of pressure from the authorities and divisions within.

One of the major attractions on this tiny island is an area called Tianya Haijiao. This is usually translated "the end of the earth." The name brings to mind several familiar Bible verses: Isaiah 49:6, Psalm 22:27-28, and Acts 1:8.

Mississippi College (MC) and the Hainan Provincial Education Commission have entered into a joint project at Hainan Foreign Language Normal School in the town of Wenchang. MC for the last two years has provided a team of teachers to

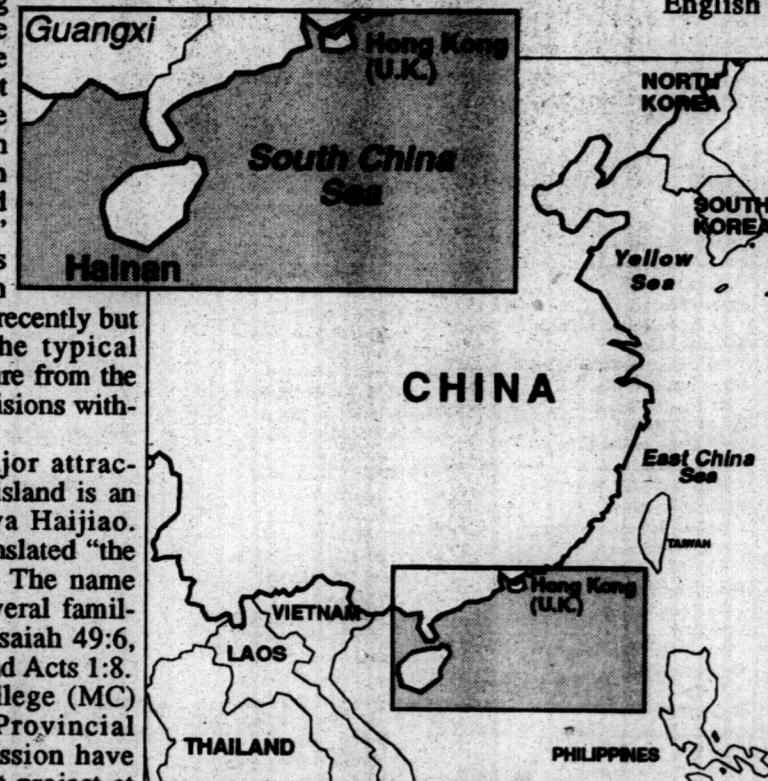
lead an oral English summer workshop. The Chinese students have studied English for several years but they need practice speaking English with native speakers. Being a professional teacher is not a requirement. MC provides a class to be taken by all workshop teachers which will prepare the leaders to teach the workshop.

Last year, Dean Parks of MC's

students were eager to learn and progressed rapidly. Because the teachers live on campus near the student dormitories, there is constant discussion and socializing outside of the classroom. Upon returning to America, the teachers continue to receive letters from their workshop students telling what an important effect the workshop had on their lives.

George Pittman of the MC English Department will lead a new group to Hainan this summer. The 1995 Oral English Workshop will be held July 6-Aug. 14. Cost for each participant will be \$3,150, which includes airfare to and from Jackson, meals, transportation, and hotels for a 7-day tour of mainland China, as well as lodging for two-day stop in Hong Kong upon entering and leaving China. Expenses during the workshop are paid by the Chinese government.

This opportunity for service requires special individuals. Living conditions are challenging, and the lifestyle is quite different from that of America. For more information or to participate, contact Pittman at Mississippi College, Box 4227, Clinton, MS 39056.



Chemistry Department led 11 teachers in conducting the four-week workshop and demonstrating lifestyle evangelism. The stu-

## Good nutrition makes holidays brighter

Wouldn't the holidays be dull and dreary if we didn't overindulge? Just the opposite is true, say health and nutrition experts. Seasonal good times also can be nutritional good times with a little care and planning.

A whirlwind of power-shopping, gorging on rich foods, late-night revelling, and high levels of stress and emotion can spoil the family's enjoyment of the holidays, or worse. The number of heart attacks, mental depressions, and other illnesses increase each year as bodies break down under yuletide pressures. On the other hand, keeping up good health habits helps maintain a cheerful mood and provides the emotional balance needed to resist excessive eating, drinking, and merry-making.

"During the holidays, families should try to maintain their normal routines, including regular nutritious meals and exercise, even if it means a little less celebrating," says Aruna Dorin, nutrition and brand products director for Leiner Health Products, Inc., the world's largest vitamin manufacturer. "If following a healthful diet is difficult, many health professionals recommend nutritional supplements."

These facts were punctuated when scientists from 34 coun-

tries gathered recently at one of the largest vitamin conferences ever in Berlin, Germany. A number of eminent researchers reported on the ability of antioxidant vitamins (C, E, and beta carotene) to protect against heart disease, cancer, cataracts, and other diseases.

Separate studies at Tufts University and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey suggested that vitamins may give a significant boost to the immune systems of older persons, improving their resistance to disease.

Another study of people who previously had "small" strokes and were taking aspirin showed a 25% reduction in the occurrence of more serious strokes when vitamin E was taken as well.

Scientists from the University of Southern California found that vitamin E may help slow the progress of atherosclerosis, a disease which can cause blockage of the arteries around the heart.

Vitamin E and beta carotene also may have a potential role in reducing the risk of several types of cancer, according to evidence presented at the conference.

Scientists agree that still more research is needed before definite recommendations can be made for antioxidant vitamin

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December